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farther back in the *Stultior es stultissimo* of Plautus.

“Arragh the devil burn you,” says Teague to his nurse, “it’s what you *changed* me while I was at your breast.”—This is the very language of Sancho Panza.

“Hah! bad luck to you, you spalpeen,” says Paddy, “If you were not idle, you would not be doing that mischief.”

Whoever will take the trouble of turning to the Tom Jones of the elegant and witty Fielding, will find these words: “I have heard it remarked by a friend, that when a child is doing *nothing*, he is doing *mischief*.”—Now I *do* remember a remark somewhat similar to this by Swift, that when a child is *silent*, he is surely committing some mischief. But, perhaps, the expression of Fielding’s friend may be considered stronger, and therefore preferable.

(*To be concluded in our next.*)

*To the Editor of the Belfast Magazine.*

TABLE-TALK, OR SKETCHES OF  
MODERN MANNERS.

SIR,

EVERY person who has devoted any time to the perusal of the classics, knows how to value any the slightest information contained in them, relative to the domestic arrangements and familiar incidents of their times. Cincinnatus, routing the enemies of his country, and extending her boundaries by his conquests, commands our respect; but we are deeply interested in his concerns, when the historian depicts him at his plough, called thence to be invested with the highest honours his country could bestow, and regretting, that in consequence of his absence his little farm must remain untilled. In like manner, Philopœmen, in his public character, secures our veneration: but we begin

to love him when we see him assisting the poor woman to collect sticks for her little fire. It is thus with all the personages recorded in the revering memories of men: they are esteemed and respected so long as they are beheld amidst their splendor; but love does not mingle itself with our esteem; as, perhaps, a little jealousy will always be found mixed in the estimates we form of those who are our superiors. But when some qualifying weakness is discovered, we then begin to love. This, together with the curiosity ingrafted in our nature, urges us to search into the most minute particulars of ancient times, and in the pursuit we feel gratified at the discovery of things most familiar amongst ourselves, even though it were no more, as Le Sage humorously says, than the discovery, that at Athens children cried when they were whipped. Thus things the most trivial are gilded as if with the full grace of novelty, and though we would ridicule the man who would now commit such things to writing, we endeavour to perpetuate, with honour, the names of those ancients who have recorded them.

While we would not be understood as attributing actual desert to those writers, we must allow them incidental desert; as we should be ungrateful indeed, if we did not make some return to those, who, though not exclusively purposing it, have yet contributed to our entertainment and instruction. Female critics, for example, are not a little pleased when their insinuations about the hair, complexion, and various perfections of a rival beauty are established through the mean of a high wind or warm ball-room. Now these critics have, no doubt, heard either from their mamas or learned from some old-fashioned goody book, that such conduct savours a little of envy; that moralists nickname such hinting *slander*, and

have said a number of smart things against it; but a discovery of similar conduct among the belles of antiquity must to our *critics* be invaluable, as it is equal to a thousand arguments: it is itself an unanswerable argument. For it shews the practice to be of *classic authority*. and it has all the authority which *prescription* can confer: not that pitiful term of sixty-one years, beyond which, according to our true law-fictions, the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, but a prescription that can plead the weight of thousands of years in its favour.

Learned men are well aware of the truth and correctness of this statement, and their withholding from the fair sex their knowledge on such subjects, can only be accounted for by the known jealousy of the male creature, and the apprehension of being eclipsed by the ladies in such studies; and, to confess the truth, there is just ground for such apprehension. The intellectual quickness of the fair sex is acknowledged, and what might not be expected from it when duly excited? We might, doubtless, look for intense application and study, when it was once made known that mines of knowledge lie yet unexplored, and that the ancients were confessedly our superiors in garters, head-dresses, cosmetics, and all the *arcana* of the toilet. To this pursuit, then, I would urge our fair countrywomen, with the assurance that they would reap certain benefits from it. In a moral point of view also, some advantage might be expected to result. Our modern *fashioners* \* might

I shall heartily agree with any one who shall object to this word, as novel, whimsical, and unauthorized; but I must rest my defence for the introduction of it on the insufficiency of any word in the language to convey the idea of "one, who devotes *all her time* to the disguising of her

learn a little modesty; as to their claims for invention, they would find that many of those inventions on which they plume themselves, were out of fashion seventeen centuries ago, at least; that nakedness among people who are supposed to be a modest cloths-wearing nation, is no new thought, and that our naked belles have been far excelled by those of antiquity, who, we are told on the word of an honest gentleman of those times, wore "*woven winds*."

The concerns of the fair sex have had the precedency, as is but just, in this exemplification of the uses, which might be made of an acquaintance with the domestic affairs of the ancients. Many of equal value might be mentioned, that could contribute to the information of the male sex. To the lovers of good living, for instance, might be pointed out the endless variety of made dishes, sauces, &c. which loaded the tables of the *good livers* in those days; and to those refiners in good eating, who eat alone, either because their enjoyment is heightened thereby, or their tit-bits are too small for two, the secret of enlarging that exquisite morsel, a goose's liver, might be imparted. But such subjects would detain me too long from what I purpose submitting to you with a hope of your patronage.

You may infer from the foregoing that the scarce, and invaluable remnants of antiquity, which contain the chit-chat of the day, and give us some notion of their dresses, fashions, cookery, &c. have occupied my mind. The plan pursued by Athenæus, in his *Deipnosophists*, or *Table Talk*, seems admirably adapted for the purpose of delineating the familiar manners of any given period of society.

person, and who thinks the only object worth pursuit is to devise something *un-  
vel*, whimsical, and absurd."

We cannot now ascertain the whole design of Athenæus in this work; but from the nature of it, we may conclude that his views were not bounded by his own times; he seems to have looked to posterity with expanding philanthropy, disinterestedly consulting the gratification of those, who could make him no return. You know, Sir, the work which remains to our times, is a kind of dramatic representation, supposing a number of persons collected at an evening repast, and employed in the discussion of a variety of subjects, some of them of the most familiar nature.

Conversation has been so little cultivated amongst us, that it may be doubted whether discussions on any subject, in the form of dialogue, would not have an unnatural appearance, and dialogue after nature would, when committed to paper, appear most empty and most absurd. But for this, I would endeavour to exemplify Athenæus' plan, by supposing some similar meeting among us, and some interesting subject discussed therein. In such a conversation, the speakers should not confine themselves to serious subjects; but any thing on which any of the company should wish for information, would be introduced, and thus the most familiar things would often be brought forward. Nor let this seem an improbable assertion: for even men of information will, on examination of themselves, be surprized, when they find they are ignorant of the construction or nature of many of those things with which they are hourly conversant. It would be unwise, however, to attempt seeking the favour of the present times, by holding forth advantages which must now appear visionary, as having no prototype in the practice of these days. I would therefore change my measures and bespeak so much indulgence, as to be

permitted to suppose that a few persons could be collected, capable of maintaining some rational conversation for a few successive evenings. I mention this, as preparatory to the introduction of my plan and proposals; lest by offending against truth in supposing any such persons could be found without aforesaid permission, I might, in the outset, excite a fatal prejudice in the minds of my readers. Permit me now, sir, (and perhaps you will say it is high time) to introduce myself and my intentions to you, and as you judge them worthy, so extend your patronage.

When Athenæus compiled his work he could not have expected much applause from his contemporaries, as they must have been as well acquainted with the topics of his compilation as himself; but as he is almost the only depositary of subjects interesting to us, he is deservedly prized. Meditating on this, I thought some similar sketch of the living manners might hereafter be interesting, and I have, with the purest love for posterity, given up all hope of applause from the present age, to obtain the gratitude of the future. With this view I propose giving a description of the chief objects, that now occupy mankind, classing them into the three grand heads of politics, dress, and domestic economy. This classification may seem imperfect; but it appears to me to include the *quicquid agunt homines*.

Under the first article I propose to include an account, not merely of the shifts, shuffles, evasions, slanders, and plumb falsehoods of statesmen, the manifestoes, replies and declarations of aggressions by crowned heads, but also the minor rehearsals of these things in counties, shires, borough-towns and private families. To this it may be objected that the things here enumerated have nothing to do with *politics*: that politics may

be justly denominated a noble science, directing the true statesman to the discharge of his painful duty, pointing out to him the resources and wants of his fellow subjects, and prescribing truth and integrity as the basis of every transaction. To this I reply, that my intention is to give a brief abstract of the times; describing things, not as they should be, but as they are. And moreover, that use, the arbiter of language, has affixed to the word the meaning in which I use it: Under *dress* I shall include, not only what is literally called dress, but also what is called so, by the figure catachresis\*, I mean *nakedness*, describing, if possible, the many twinkling changes of the fashion, and the advantages and disadvantages thereof. The third head partakes so much of both the preceding, that on second thoughts I shall throw what I proposed saying on it, into the other articles. For domestic economy naturally separates into management of the live stock, viz...the husband, children, servants, horses, pigs and poultry (and this is minor politics) and into purchasing fashionable furniture, starving and squeezing in order to give a fashionable party occasionally; and what is this with the *et ceteras* but dress and fashion.

You are now in full possession of the outlines of my scheme, and, however I may fail in the execution, I expect your approbation for my disinterestedness in giving up the approbation I might hope to obtain on some

\* For the instruction of my female readers I shall subjoin the definition, &c. of this figure. Rhetoricians have observed many singular properties in the application of words, which they have denominated *figures*; as metaphor, simile, &c. the catachresis is an abuse of words, as when a word is used, which implies the opposite to what is said; as: g. A lady has been muffled up all day at home; in the evening she lays aside her dress and her modesty together; she goes out almost *naked*. Then, *catachrestice*, she is said to have *dressed* for going out.

other ground from the present age, and in imitation of my generous predecessor, writing only for posterity. Let me further observe, that I proceed under the apprehension that my expectations may be disappointed: if you grant insertion I have no fear but it will reach futurity. For I anticipate an honourable perpetuity to the existence of your Magazine. But I also anticipate much undeserved censure: my veracity I fear, will be impeached; and should Baron Munchausen, or 'The True History' be handed down, my painful chronicle will, I fear, be classed with them. Now this would be a case of some hardship, for truth shall be my polar star. Under the head major *politics*, I shall imitate the plan you have proposed, and sedulously avoid any party bias; but if I should mention, that in a time of unexampled danger, statesmen were squabbling for what may be called pence and farthings, while the sterling millions of the state were assaulted by an inveterate foe, will not posterity stand in doubt? In minor politics...a form of matrimonial service may reach future times: in this the woman pledges herself unequivocally to obedience; now, if I be faithful, my detail of manners shall go to prove, that this never was her intention, that she would laugh at the notion: as absurd and contrary to her intention in marrying, which was to gain her freedom. One instance from dress, and I have done: your meteorological accounts will prove, that one part of our year is in general very inclement, and that *men* think it necessary to be warmly wrapped up at that time. The ladies, on the contrary, brave the cold in a dress in which a man must perish, and in the winter of this *ultima thule* the ordinary and insufficient dress is exchanged at times of festivals for a simulation of dress.

I feel the full force of all this; yet

thinking it probable that there may be some reasonable people in after times, I shall leave my work to their judgment, in hopes they will, on examination, discover internal evidences of my veracity.

I hope, Sir, this statement of my purpose will procure me recommendation of assistance in such an arduous work, and you may rely on finding me your very grateful servant,

FABIVS PICTOR.

*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

*On the Oriental Emigration of the Irish Druids... Proceed from their knowledge in Astronomy, collated with that of the Indians and Chaldeans. From fragments of Irish M.S.S. By Lieut. General Vallancey, L.L.D. F.R.S. M.R.I.A. &c.*

Hæc omnia nostris temporibus completa sunt, tunc cum ædes sacras solo æquari ac funditus subverti, sacros divinarum scripturarum libros in medio foro coneremari, oculis nostris vidimus.

EUSEB. L. S.

Le meilleur moyen de decouvrir l'origine d'une nation est de suivre en remontant les traces de de sa langue comparee a celle des peuples avec qui la tradition des faits nous apprend que ce peuple a en quelque rapport. (PRES. DE BROSSIS.)

FROM the fragments of mythology and astronomy, from similarity of language in physical, metaphysical and astronomical terms, which we shall produce in this essay, there is the strongest reason to believe that the antient inhabitants of Ireland were the Cothi (as they denominate themselves) or Indo-Scythæ, who, Mr. Wilford has proved from the Paranas, were the Palis, Balis, or Bils from that part of Hindoostan, bordering on the Indus, who, according to Irish History, did afterwards settle in Omann, on the Arabian Gulf, where, mixing with the Dedannites, they became the carriers by land and by sea, of the trade from Ethiopia to India, still preserving the name of shepherds.

Mr. Bruce found their descendants in the same spot a few years ago, following the same employments, making the *Arqs*, or wicker vessels, covered with hides, for crossing the red-sea; and the *Carbh*, or planked vessels for longer voyages. "These people," says he, "were in Hebrew, called Phut, and in all other languages, shepherds; they are so still, for they still exist...they subsist by the same occupations...never had another...and therefore cannot be mistaken. They are called *Babus*, *Bagla*, *Belouce*\*, *Berberi*, *Barabra*, *Zilla*, and *Habab*, which all signify but one thing, namely, that of shepherd; it is very probable that some of these words signified different degrees among them, as we shall see by the sequel.

In these names we discover the *Palis* or *Balis*, the *Bucal* or Shepherd, and the *Seal*, all Irish words for sheep-grounds and shepherds, or flocks of sheep—in Arabic, *Seleh*, a flock; even at this present hour, it is the custom in the mountains of Scotland, that some people remove to feed their cattle on the hills, dwelling, during that season in huts, called *sealans*, or shepherds' huts, and in winter retire to their warmer habitations in the valleys. The name *Berberi* may probably be the Irish Fearbaire, a cowherd, to distinguish him from the shepherd.

"Letters too," adds Mr. Bruce, "at least one sort of them, and arithmetical characters†, we are told, were

\* The Indo-Scythæ, occupied the coast of Syria, under the title of Belidæ, Cadmians, and Phœnicæ. (Bryant.) They are called Cusæans, Arabians; Eruthræans, Ethiopians. But among themselves, their general patronymic was Cuth, and their country Cutha (Bryant.) Scythæ in sacris Egyptiorum instructi ab exercitu Ramesis qui jam annos ante Sesostrim circiter centum, Lybia, Ethiopia, Medis, Persis, Bactris, et Scythis potitus dicitur; fuerunt Colchi Scythæ. Egyptiorum coloni.

† To the Indo-Scythæ we are indebted for the use of those cyphers or figures,